

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 OES-06 AID-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 /098 W
----- 001554

R 031545Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5302
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MAPUTO 1413

GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, UR, US
SUBJECT: COMMENTS OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR

1. SUMMARY: SOVIET AMBASSADOR PROFESSES TO KNOW
VERY LITTLE ABOUT ZIPA, BUT THINKS IT SIGNIFICANT THAT
ZIPA HAS SENT DELEGATION TO GENEVA AFTER HAVING CON-
DEMNED CONFERENCE. HE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT USSR IS
STILL BACKING ZAPU, BUT EXPRESSED WHAT HE SAID WAS
HIS PERSONAL OPINION THAT CONFERENCE STANDS BEST
CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING IF UK AND US RECOGNIZE THE PATRIOTIC
FRONT AS BONAFIDE REPRESENTATIVE AND SPOKESMAN FOR
THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE. IF CONFERENCE FAILS, HE FEARFUL
OF CIVIL WAR. HE ADMITS THAT MOZAMBIQUE IS DEFENSE-
LESS AGAINST RHODESIAN INCURSIONS, BUT WOULD NOT BE
DRAWN OUT ON WHAT IF ANYTHING SOVIETS OR MOZAMBICANS
MAY HAVE IN MIND TO COUNTER FUTURE INCURSIONS. ON
SUBJECT OF AID, HE NOTED THAT SOVIET TECHNICIANS ARE
BEGINNING ARRIVE IN NUMBERS, AS WELL AS SOME SOVIET
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FISHING RESEARCH VESSELS.

END SUMMARY

2. SOVIET AMBASSADOR PETR EVSIUKOV RETURNED TO MOZAMBIQUE IN EARLY NOVEMBER AFTER TWO MONTHS LEAVE AND CONSULTATIONS IN SOVIET UNION. I AGREED MEET WITH HIM TO REVIEW DEVELOPMENTS OF PAST FEW MONTHS. FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR ONE HOUR CONVERSATION.

3. GENEVA CONFERENCE: EVSIUKOV'S MAIN INTEREST SEEMED BE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. IN RESPONSE HIS REQUEST FOR MY COMMENTS, I SAID THAT USG REGRETTED THAT CONFERENCE HAD BEEN MOVING SO SLOWLY, BUT EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT THE DELEGATIONS HAD AGREED ON OUTSIDE DATE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND THAT TALKS HAD BEGUN ON FORMATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT. I OBSERVED THAT THERE WERE MAJOR DIFFERENCES YET TO BE RESOLVED AND SAID I HOPED ALL THE DELEGATIONS WERE NOW READY NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH. I SAID IT IN EVERYBODY'S INTEREST THAT NEGOTIATIONS SUCCEED AND FIGHTING STOP, AND ADDED THAT WE HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED THAT SOVIETS HAD BEEN SO CRITICAL AND NEGATIVE ABOUT CONFERENCE. EVSIUKOV DENIED THAT SOVIETS HAD BEEN NEGATIVE, ASKED ME WHERE I HAD GOTTEN THAT NOTION. I SAID THAT IT READILY APPARENT FROM THE COMMENTARY IN THE SOVIET MEDIA, MANY OF THE ARTICLES OF WHICH ARE OFTEN REPRINTED IN MOZAMBIQUE PRESS. SUCH NEGATIVE COMMENTS I ADDED WERE NOT AT ALL HELPFUL IN CREATING ATMOSPHERE CONDUCTIVE TO SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF TALKS.

4. ZIPA PARTICIPATION AT CONFERENCE: EVSIUKOV SAID HE CONSIDERED IT VERY SIGNIFICANT THAT ZIPA HAD DECIDED TO SEND A DELEGATION TO GENEVA, AFTER HAVING FOR MONTHS BEEN SO CRITICAL OF THE CONFERENCE. EVSIUKOV SAID THAT HERETOFOR HE HAD ASSUMED ZIPA WAS A MILITARY FORCE, "HOW IT APPEARS THEY HAVE BECOME A POLITICAL MOVEMENT." HE SAID HE KNEW VERY LITTLE ABOUT ZIPA AND WAS NOT SURE HOW TO INTERPRET THIS LATEST DEVELOPMENT, BUT HE THOUGHT IT "VERY IMPORTANT." (DESPITE SEVERAL ATTEMPTS, I WAS UNABLE INDUCE EVSIUKOV TO COMMENT ON INDIVIDUAL ZIPA LEADERS.)
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5. OTHER ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALISTS: EVSIUKOV ASKED MY OPINION OF THE VARIOUS ZIMBABWEAN MOVEMENTS AND LEADERS. I SAID THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR ME TO EXPRESS AN OPINION, THAT FROM THE START OF U.S. INITIATIVE WE HAD TAKEN THE POSITION THAT THE ISSUE OF ZIMBABWEAN REPRESENTATION AT THE CONFERENCE AND THE MAKE-UP OF A FUTURE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT WERE

MATTERS FOR ZIMBABWEANS THEMSELVES AND THE FRONT-LINE AFRICAN LEADERS TO DECIDE. AFRICAN LEADERS HAD COMMENDED US FOR THIS POSITION AND WE WERE ADHERING TO IT. EVSIUKOV REMARKED THAT HE HAD OPINION SOME (UNSPECIFIED) OF THE FRONT-LINE LEADERS THOUGHT WE WERE STILL BACKING THE "MODERATES."

6. SOVIET SUPPORT FOR NKOMO AND ZAPU: EVSIUKOV ADMITTED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD SUPPORTED ZAPU IN THE PAST, AND WERE CONTINUING TO SUPPORT ZAPU. HE THEN WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT CLEARLY HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE AND WOULD WIN AN ELECTION IF ONE WERE HELD, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT THINK ANY USEFUL PURPOSE WOULD BE SERVED BY HOLDING ELECTIONS. SPEAKING "STRICTLY PERSONALLY" HE HOPED UK AND U.S. WOULD RECOGNIZE AND DEAL WITH THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AS THE BONAFIDE REPRESENTATIVE AND SPOKESMAN OF THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE. (EARLIER HE HAD TOLD THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR THAT THIS MIGHT BE THE ONLY WAY TO AVOID A CIVIL WAR.) I RESPONDED BY SAYING THAT IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO SAY WHO AMONG THE COMPETING NATIONALIST LEADERS COMMANDED THE WIDEST FOLLOWING INSIDE RHODESIA. NEITHER THE SOVIET UNION NOR THE U.S. SHOULD PETEND TO SPEAK FOR THE ZIMBABWEANS. THEY SHOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITY EXPRESS THEIR OWN OPINION.

7. RHODESIAN ATTACKS: EVSIUKOV SAID PRESIDENT MACHEL WAS VERY UPSET BY THE REPEATED RHODESIAN RAIDS, WHICH, ACCORDING EVSIUKOV, "MOZAMBIQUE IS HELPLESS TO PREVENT." "THE RHODESIANS CAN EVEN ATTACK MAPUTO IF THEY WISH; MOZAMBIQUE'S REFLES WILL NOT STOP THEM." IN CIRCUMSTANCES, EVSIUKOV SAID MACHEL MUST DO SOME-
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THING, BUT HE GAVE NO CLUES WHAT MACHEL MAY HAVE IN MIND, AND DECLINED TO COMMENT WHEN I MENTIONED THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS HAD REPORTED THE ARRIVAL OF ARMORED CARS FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT THERE HAD BEEN SPECULATION IN BOTH THE SOUTH AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN PAPERS THAT MOZAMBIQUE MIGHT REQUEST CUBAN HELP. ALL EVSIUKOV WOULD SAY WAS THAT THEY SOVIETS ARE SENDING MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO FRELIMO AND THE ZIMBABWEAN-"THAT WE DO NOT DENY"-AND THAT THE AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS MUST DECIDE FOR THEMSELVES IF THEY WANT OUTSIDE HELP.

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USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MAPUTO 1413

GENEVA FOR WISNER

8. SOVIET ECONOMY AID: BEFORE LEAVING I REMARKED THAT HIS EMBASSY MUST BE BUSY, WITH SO MANY TEHCNICIANS ARRIVING. HE SAID THAT TRUE, MENTIONING SPECIFICALLY THE PORT PILOTS IN MAPUTO, GEOLIGISTS CONDUCTING A MINERALS SURVEY, AND THE DOCTORS. HE ALSO SAID THAT THERE WERE A FEW SOVIET VESSELS ENGAGED IN FISHERIES RESEARCH. HE THEN VOLUNTEERED THAT THE MOZAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT WAS NOT ALWAYS THE EASIEST TO DEAL WITH. HE SAID THAT THE MOZAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO MAKE ITS OWN DECISIONS, AND TAKES ITS TIME MAKING THEM. HOWEVER, HE THOUGH THIS WAS A GOOD SIGN.

9. COMMENT: GIVEN EVSIUKOV'S CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH MACHEL AND HIS EXCELLENT CONTACTS WITH GPRM, HE CERTAINLY KNOWS FAR MORE ABOUT MACHEL'S INTENTIONS THAN HE WILLING TO TALK ABOUT. HE ALSO PROBABLY KNOWS MORE ABOUT ZIPA THAN HE LET ON, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO EVIDENCE WE ABLE TO PICK UP HERE FROM

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THE PRESS OR OUR OWN CONTACTS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE
IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH ZIPA LEADERS (OUR IMPRESSION
IS THAT THEY KEEP PRETTY MUCH TO THEMSELVES.

10. WHEN TALKING ABOUT SOVIET SUPPORT FOR ZAPU AND
NKOMO, EVSIUKOV SEEMED BE ON THE DEFENSIVE. I
WOULD IMAGINE HE WISHES THE SOVIET UNION TO BE ON THE ZIPA
BANDWAGON AS WELL. THIS MAY BE WHY EVSIUKOV WAS SO QUICK TO
ASSERT THAT THE PATRIOTIC FRONT IS THE ORGANIZATION

THAT TRULY REPRESENTS THE WILL OF THE ZIMBABWEAN
PEOPLE. EVSIUKOV'S DISDAIN FOR ELECTIONS, HOWEVER,
SUGGESTS THAT HE MAY NOT BE ALL THAT CERTAIN THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT WOULD WIN IN AN HONEST ELECTION.
WE WOULD EXPECT THE SOVIETS (AND ZIPA) TO TAKE THE LINE
THAT ELECTIONS ARE NOT ONLY UNNECESSARY, BUT ALSO DIS-
REPUTIVS OF BLACK UNITY.

11. ON QUESTIONS OF U.S. POLICY, I FOUND IT SUR-
PRISING THAT EVSIUKOV SEEMED BE SO LITTLE INTERESTED
IN AFRICAN POLICY OF PRESIDENT-ELECT CARTER.
ALTHOUGH RECENT VISITS OF SENATOR CLARK AND CONGRESS-
MAN DIGGS GAVE HIM AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS
ABOUT CARTER, HE CHOSE NOT TO DO SO.
DE PREE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, MEETING REPORTS, NEGOTIATIONS, LIBERATION FRONTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MAPUTO01413
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760449-0611
From: MAPUTO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761275/aaaacndv.tel
Line Count: 251
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COMMENTS OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR
TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, MZ, RH, ZAPU, ZIPA, (EVSUUKOV, PETR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006